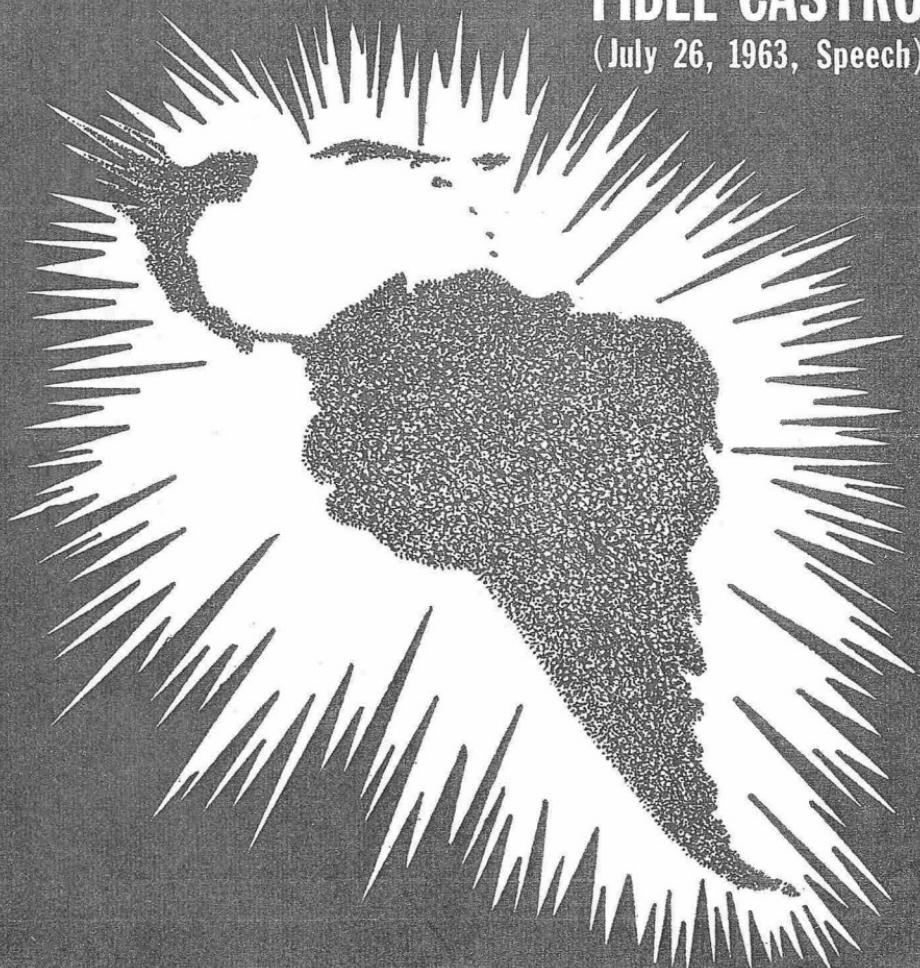


THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION IN LATIN AMERICA

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FIDEL CASTRO
(July 26, 1963, Speech)



The Road to Revolution In Latin America

(Speech by Fidel Castro, July 26, 1963, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks in Cuba)

Members of the friendly delegations who are visiting us (applause); Workers:

Today we have reached the tenth anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks at Santiago de Cuba. (Applause.) And the people have gathered in the *Plaza de la Revolution* to commemorate this date in a way worthy of these ten years of the history of our country.

It gives us deep satisfaction to see that on the tenth anniversary more people are present than ever, more people are here in the *Plaza de la Revolution* than on any previous celebration of the Twenty-sixth of July. (Applause.)

These occasions serve to measure the feelings of the people, the revolutionary temper of the people and the extent to which the people support the Revolution. (Applause.) And from what we can see here, the *Plaza de la Revolution* is becoming a small place for a gathering of the people. Occasions like this serve not only to measure the revolutionary temper of the people, but serve also to dishearten the enemies of the Revolution. (Applause and shouts of "We will win!") They serve to destroy the illusions of the imperialists.

And what people is it that has gathered here today? Is it the same people of the first year of the Revolution? Yes and no. The same men and women of the people are here; and yet it is a different people than the one that met the first year of the Revolution. (Applause.) That people came under the impulse of enthusiasm, under the impulse of faith in the Revolution. This people assembled here today assembles under the impulse of revolutionary consciousness! (Applause.) They are men and women with a high degree of revolutionary consciousness, gained from the Revolution.

It is not the disorganized people of the first days of the Revolution. It is a much better organized, an incomparably better organized and disciplined people than it was in the first months of the Revolution. It is a people that knows what it is doing and knows what it wants. It is a people incomparably better prepared to fight and to win. It is a people incomparably better prepared to defend itself from its enemies. (Applause.) Isn't that so? Let's have a show of hands of those who have had military training, those who know how to use a gun to defend their country (shouts), those who are ready to defend it to the last drop of their blood! (Shouts.) This is the people we have today! (Applause.) This is the people that the imperialists know they face today!

And while over there we see a big representation of our glorious Rebel Army (applause), these men are simply those who are on permanent guard against our enemies. Because the real Army of the Revolution is the people as a whole! (Applause.)

There is present here today a huge contingent of young people who are attending technological schools and higher educational centers through scholarships given by the Revolution. Further out, at the edge of the grounds, you can see the long line of young people who could not get into the Plaza. And from the color of their uniforms we can see that they are the 10,000 farm girls from the mountains of Oriente (applause) who have also come to the meeting.

In other words, the revolutionary people is on the rise and is organizing itself; the Revolution is developing and becoming stronger. And this is the result of the first years of the revolutionary power.

How long will the revolutionary power last? (Shouts of "Forever!")

In the world there are pipe dreamers. We all know that. Some people like to kid themselves. And in the front ranks of these pipe dreamers and self-kidders are many big personages of Yankee imperialism.

Mr. Kennedy (shouts and catcalls) told the mercenaries in the city of Miami one day that their little flag would be returned to them some day in the city of Havana. (Shouts and catcalls.) Recently, one of these stepsons of imperialism, an ex-president of Nicaragua, said that he would soon go for a walk in the streets of Havana. (Shouts and catcalls.) And there is no lack of things to make you laugh, such as the case of a gentleman also known as "President" but who goes more commonly by the name of "Pajarito Morales"—and don't think that I invented that adjective, because that's the name of this gentleman, said to be the president of Honduras. This gentleman had the brilliant idea of making a bet with Marshal Montgomery last year that the Cuban Revolutionary Government would not last until 1963. (Shouts and catcalls.) And Marshal Montgomery, who is very nice and in favor of peace (applause), won the bet, naturally.

But it seems that this gentleman did not learn his lesson. He bet again that the Revolution would not last until 1964. (Laughter.) What a pity that he doesn't want to bet with us! What a pity there aren't more of these bettors because we could convert these bets into a magnificent source of foreign exchange! (Applause.)

And if these gentlemen continue to bet with Marshal Montgomery, Marshal Montgomery will not have to worry about his economic future.

It so happens that there are people who like to delude themselves and who refuse to understand reality, people who refuse to understand that the Revolution is an irreversible historic fact.

What is the significance of today's date? Ten years ago our country found itself in a situation similar to that in many Latin-American brother countries. The military government of Batista had succeeded the corrupt Grau and Prio administrations in power. Once again, on March 10, 1952, Batista and his *camarilla* seized the destiny of the nation by force. The people were left in a situation without any way out.

The Republic had had one government after another, each more corrupt than the previous one, each more tied in with the North American imperialists. For the nation no perspectives of possible progress were visible. The social evils were worsening, unemployment, ignorance and poverty were mounting. While the population had doubled, the country continued to live on the same number of sugar mills, on the same amount of sugar, the real price of which was much lower than in the twenties. The population was growing but the wealth of the nation was not. The price of our basic product went down while prices of imported articles kept increasing because of the control the imperialists exercised over our markets.

Ignorance was widespread, and humble citizens could not hope for an education, for a decent job, for admittance to a hospital, for solution to any vital problem involving them or their family.

Close to a Way Out

It was in these circumstances that the military coup took place, and it was in these circumstances

that our people found themselves virtually without a way out. But, paradoxical as it may seem, it was precisely when the roads were more blocked than ever that the Cuban people were coming closer than ever to a way out. (Applause.)

The political parties had been dissolved; the press, the radio and television placed in the service of the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism and, consequently, of the ruling political regime. And the nation, deprived of all participation in public life, faced the process of being disposed of by this military dictatorship, which, in order to perpetuate itself in power with the support of the machine politicians and the reactionary classes, also resorted to electoral trickery. We see this problem often in other republics of Latin America — the "gorillas" [Argentine slang for right-wing militarists] move in on the discredited civil power, overthrow it, set up a military dictatorship, get the support of imperialism and then begin to work out dirty political formulas, pseudo-democratic solutions, in order to maintain their rule in the situation.

That was happening in our country, too. And the parties of the bourgeoisie have always lent themselves to this trickery, to these maneuvers. In our country, the parties of the bourgeoisie and the exploiters were collaborating with the Batista regime in order to get seats in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, and to divide among themselves the fruits of exploiting and plundering the nation. It was in these circumstances that a tactic and strategy of struggle arose and a new concept of the people's struggle began to be worked out.

The importance of this date lies in the fact that on that day our people began to initiate, on a modest scale if you wish, began to take the road that led to the Revolution. (Applause.) To have stood, arms folded, in that situation would have meant the indefinite rule of the military clique, the indefinite continuation in power of the reactionary parties of the exploiting classes. It would have meant the continuance of dirty politics, of corruption, and of the systematic plundering of our country.

The significance of that date is that it opened a new road for the people. The significance of that date lies in the fact that it marked the beginning of a new concept of struggle which, within a short time, smashed the military dictatorship and created the conditions for the development of the Revolution. (Applause.)

The attack on the Moncada Barracks was the energetic and worthy reply to the tenth of March. (Applause.) It was the determined reply to a government imposed by bayonets. And this reply, once the first setbacks were overcome, once the weaknesses and inexperience were overcome, once it was fully developed, this reply made possible what had seemed impossible before, made possible the destruction of a modern army — in spite of a series of theories according to which the people could not fight against such a force. It made possible what had seemed impossible, but it was not a miracle. What took place in Cuba was not a miracle.

And our visitors will ask, "What happened in Cuba and how could this occur in Cuba?" Our visitors from all over the world, but especially the visitors from Latin America (applause), will ask themselves how was it possible?

It is possible that the presence of such a gigantic multitude, the presence of so many hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people before their eyes—and not just the presence but the vigor and enthusiasm of this crowd (applause) — will make them think that what happened in Cuba was a miracle.

But what happened in Cuba was no miracle; and what happened in Cuba can happen in exactly the same way in many other countries of Latin America! (Applause.)

Everything that has been done in Cuba can be done — and even more and better — in many other countries of Latin America! (Applause.)

For us Cubans it would not be of such interest to celebrate this date with so much joy, so much enthusiasm, so much revolutionary fervor, if in our eyes this date did not have value as a lesson, a useful, very useful lesson to tens and tens of millions of brothers in Latin America (applause); if this date and what it symbolizes did not signify solid encouragement, a firm hope that there is a remedy for the evils suffered by the exploited and hungry of this continent, for the millions of workers and peasants and destitute Indians of this continent; if this date did not signify hope and faith in the possibility of resolving once and for all the tragic social evils of this continent, where the infant mortality-rate is among the highest in the world, where the average life span is extremely low, and where the oligarchical minorities — in complicity with the Yankee monopolies—mercilessly plunder these peoples.

This date is important — not as something concerning the past but as something concerning the future. (Applause.) Here in our country there was a powerful professional army at the service of the exploiters; there were numerous bourgeois parties that dragged a section of the masses along wrong roads; and there was a whole system of press, radio and television at the service of the vested interests. Even more, when Batista seized power, the country had a financial situation such as no other country in Latin America enjoys today because in the vaults of the National Bank of Cuba were more than \$500 million in foreign exchange. This is not the situation in Guatemala. This is not the situation in Ecuador. This is not the situation in Peru. This is not the situation in Argentina. This is not the situation in Colombia. This is not the situation in Venezuela. (Applause.) This is not the situation in Nicaragua, in Honduras and other countries of Central America.

And in spite of this, under these difficult conditions for the Revolution — as always happens in history when the efforts and the ideas of a few, if the effort is well directed and the ideas are correct, become little by little converted into the effort and the ideas of the masses — in those difficult conditions our people found a way out.

The Moncada Barracks did not fall. Unforeseen factors caused the failure of the attempt to seize the fortress — imponderable factors. That could have been a hard blow for us, to our convictions and our faith that this was the right road. It could have strengthened particularly the position of those who said it was not possible to fight against Batista's army. It could have strengthened particularly the position of the machine politicians and their arguments in favor of election deals in which the people never get anything. Nevertheless, our faith remained firm, unshakeable, that this was the road, and we resumed work — now with more experience, with greater carefulness, in advancing the struggle.

But when we landed from the (*fishing boat*) "Granma" — 82 men (applause) — we were still betrayed by our inexperience, by our immaturity as fighters, and once again a stiff reverse hit our forces. This expeditionary force — organized and prepared at great effort and sacrifices — was virtually dispersed and annihilated.

That could have been a tremendous blow to our faith and our conviction that this was the road. Nevertheless, our faith and our conviction remained unshakeable. We believed that this was the road and finally history and facts, reality and life, proved that it was the road! (Applause.)

And those who were surrounded in the cane fields that day, so few that they could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and who have lived through these ten years of revolution and of struggle and who today stand before a whole people like this — a great people like this, which is both the creator and the product of the Revolution (applause) — how can we not feel in the depth of our souls the

conviction and the faith that for peoples there is always a road—that for oppressed peoples there is always a solution? (Applause.)

But this road does not open by itself; this road must be opened up; this road must be opened by the revolutionary fighters. (Applause.) There is a means of opening up the road and that is to say, "We must open the road!" And there is a means of never opening the road and that is to say, "We don't want to open the road!" (Applause.)

Pre-Revolutionary Conditions

In many Latin-American countries the pre-revolutionary conditions are incomparably better than those which existed in our country. There are countries in Latin America, plundered and made destitute by the (*foreign*) monopolies and the oligarchies (*native land-holding monopolies –ed.*), where hungry and desperate masses await an opening to erupt into history.

And it is the duty of revolutionaries to make this opening. The duty of the revolutionary is not only to study theory. (Applause.) The duty of revolutionaries does not consist of gorging on theoretical knowledge, forgetting the practical realities of the revolution. The duty of revolutionaries is not only to learn, to know and to feel convinced of a conception of life, history, and revolutionary society, but also the conception of a road, of a tactic, of a strategy that leads to the victory of those ideas. (Applause and cries of "Fidel! Fidel!")

That is the duty of revolutionaries — not to wait for the "Greek calends" to see if the roads open by themselves, or if by some miracle the exploiting regimes disappear.

And the duty of the revolutionaries, above all at this moment, is to know how to perceive and catch the changes in the correlation of forces which have taken place in the world, and to understand that this change facilitates the struggle of the peoples. The duty of revolutionaries, of the Latin-American revolutionaries, is not to wait for a change in the correlation of forces to produce the miracle of social revolutions in Latin America (applause), but to make full use of everything that favors the revolutionary movement in this changed correlation of forces and to make revolutions! (Applause.) This is something only too clear and obvious.

And the blame if certain conditions are squandered, if the opportunity is not seized, if circumstances are not properly utilized, will not fall on anyone — no other party or revolutionary state, nor on us — the blame will fall on the revolutionaries in each country, on whom it lies to make a revolution. (Applause.)

To us this is an obvious fact; it is a very evident fact for Latin America and we are quite clear about this. If we had not made the revolution, would somebody have made it for us? (Exclamations of "No!") We made the revolution and then we found support in favorable circumstances — support and advantage in the extraordinary change in the correlation of forces; the support of the Soviet Union and of the entire socialist camp. (Heavy applause.)

We know, from experience and conviction, that every people that does what the Cuban people did will have the firm support of the Soviet Union and of the entire socialist camp. (Applause.) And where the revolutionaries do not know how to fulfill their duty, they alone will be held responsible before their people; they alone will bear the guilt before history — because it lies with them to decide and to act. What we can do is to reaffirm this conviction, reaffirm this absolute faith that the Cuban Revolution opened the perspectives for the struggle in many countries of this continent, and that the

Cuban Revolution opened a road, provided an experience and an example which, if fully understood, will be very useful to other Latin-American peoples.

What is the situation of Latin America? That of a continent in crisis, a continent where revolution is inevitable. When we use the general term "Latin America" in speaking about revolution, we do not mean that conditions are exactly the same in all countries. There are some countries where a certain political stability exists, greater political stability than in others, an economic situation which differs from others. We refer to those countries where the oligarchies have imposed an iron power on the exploited masses, and where all roads ahead are closed to the people.

But, in general terms, Latin America's situation is that of a continent where the population grows at a faster rate than its wealth, and where poverty, consequently, is continually increasing; a continent producing raw materials and agricultural products the price of which is dropping lower and lower in the market while the price of imported articles is constantly rising; a continent where the nations each year export more and receive less in exchange for what they export; a continent where the masses are daily acquiring greater revolutionary awareness and where political crises follow each other with amazing rapidity.

You have had the opportunity of reading the news about what has been happening in Argentina, in Peru, in Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala, Paraguay, Nicaragua and other countries. The "Alliance for Progress" is in crisis (shouts and catcalls) and in crisis for a series of reasons. The imperialists try to blackmail the oligarchies and the oligarchies try to blackmail the imperialists.

The imperialists tell them, "If you don't carry out some reforms, communism will spread." And the oligarchies say to the imperialists, "If you don't give us some money, communism will spread."

And of course the oligarchies are not capable of carrying out reforms and the imperialists don't have any money to squander. The oligarchs are incapable of making reforms and the imperialists are incapable of conceiving of any kind of aid that is not aid for their own interests, aid for their own companies, their monopolies. And, consequently, it is absolutely impossible for this offspring of imperialism and the oligarchies to bring the slightest benefit to the people.

Yankee imperialism is in a difficult economic situation. Why is it in a difficult economic situation? It is a consequence of its reactionary policy, a consequence of its bellicose policy, a consequence of its aggressive policy.

Imperialist Crisis

The United States, at the end of the Second World War, had enormous gold reserves that backed the value of its currency. Since then a constant drainage of gold has occurred in the United States and its reserves have diminished beyond the point absolutely required to maintain the value of its currency.

And why this incessant drainage? Because since the end of the Second World War, the imperialists have followed a belligerent policy, an aggressive policy of interference and intervention all over the world. They dedicated themselves to surrounding the socialist camp with military bases, and tens upon tens of millions of dollars in foreign reserves were spent in building these bases, in maintaining more than one million troops and armies outside the United States.

And now they are harvesting the fruits of this policy in the reduction of their gold reserves, in the crisis of their economy, in technical backwardness as compared with other capitalist countries that are competitors in the world market.

The various administrations of the United States have wasted the country's gold reserves and placed it in the difficult situation where it is today, which has forced them to ask for help from the International Monetary Fund, and to adopt measures that injure the interests of their own allies — to raise the rate of interest, increase taxes on foreign loans, on foreign holdings, and to adopt a series of measures that injure the interests of other nations. They have been obliged to cut down on many things, including even their plans of aggression.

And that is the situation facing the economy and the reserves of the United States when the whole Latin-American continent is demanding justice and liberty. Because the private enterprises of these countries don't invest out of fear of revolution, the Yankee private enterprises are also intimidated by the danger of revolution, and the U.S. Treasury is less and less able to mobilize resources that would allow it to support the classes which are its allies, the interests that are its allies in these countries. And now we have the case of Congress in the United States, the North American congressmen cutting in half certain funds that the administration was requesting for the Alliance for Progress.

Of course, that famous Alliance was conceived on a completely false basis, as an instrument of aggression against the Cuban Revolution, and it was doomed to failure from the beginning. And they themselves are taking it on themselves to publicize the virtual failure of this Alliance. Without a revolution capable of bringing about great reforms and great transformations, no progress will be possible for these countries.

You remember our past that is still so recent. What did the politicians do with the money? They stole it. What did the politicians do with the money for public education? They stole it. What did they do with the money for the Ministry of Public Health? They stole it. What did the congressmen, senators, mayors, councilmen and all that plague of dirty politicians do? They stole and deposited the money in foreign banks!

The same thing is happening in Peru, in Colombia, in Argentina, in Paraguay, Venezuela, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and other countries that I may have forgotten to name.

And what is the political situation in these countries? Complete instability, if the situation has not already escaped the control of the ruling classes, embroiled in all types of rivalry, as in the case of Argentina. There's news every day about a military coup in Argentina, a military rebellion, an uprising in a military installation, coups and counter coups, and more coups and more counter coups.

And what did they do to try to get out of this situation? They held rigged elections, excluding the forces of the left, excluding the Peronist movement — which is the majority in that country — excluding the Communist party, and excluding the other organizations of the left. (Applause.)

This is the representative democracy that the Yankees proclaim; elections of this kind in which the majority of the people cannot vote, cannot declare themselves for a candidate. And so a "Mr. Nobody" was elected president by a minority, without any possibility whatsoever of taking action, under the shadow of the barracks and Yankee imperialism.

Other elections were held in Peru last year and as the "gorillas" did not like the results, they organized a *coup d'etat*. Recently, a year later, they held another election, won by the candidate who had the approval of the "gorillas" and imperialism. Consequently, they let him take office. If he dares make a single reform, he will be out in three days. Let them do no more than enact an agrarian reform law similar to ours in Cuba and we will see how long these puppet governments last!

Which are the least politically stable countries in Latin America? Precisely those that

unconditionally supported imperialism in its attacks against Cuba. Those countries whose delegates to the OAS (Organization of American States) were bulldogs, ferocious in the attack against our country.

Who does not remember the hate of Prado, the one from Peru, of Frondizi, of Ydigoras? What happened to all these governments that served imperialism unconditionally, that obeyed its orders, that were always against the Cuban Revolution? The facts demonstrate that they were the weakest governments, the most reactionary, without the support of the people, without any stability whatsoever. Frondizi was overthrown by the "gorillas." Prado was overthrown by the "gorillas." Ydigoras was overthrown by the "gorillas." Arosemena was overthrown by the "gorillas."

All these presidents were great friends of imperialism, great allies of imperialism. And what happened when the "gorillas," that is, the most reactionary sectors of the Armed Forces, swept them from power? Imperialism then followed its habitual tactics; because Yankee imperialism is a shrewd fox. It practices policies of complete hypocrisy, without principles, opportunistic, casuistical (*employing improbable rationalizations of its actions to serve its ends –see Websters – ed.*).

Puppets "Made in U.S.A."

Imperialism is in a certain contradiction with some of its puppets. Take the case of the Venezuelan puppet, Mr. Betancourt. (Shouts and catcalls.) This gentleman tries to pose as the prototype of the kind of representative democracy "Made in U.S.A." [In English in original.] (Applause.) But this gentleman has always lived in fear that the "gorillas" are going to give him a "coup." And every time there is a "coup," he goes into a sulk. There's a "coup" in Argentina and so he says, "I don't recognize this government!" There's a "coup" in Ecuador and he says, "I don't recognize this government!" There's a "coup" in Peru and he says, "I don't recognize this government!" Why? Because when he sees his neighbor's roof on fire, he wants to sprinkle water on his own.

Then the imperialists discover themselves in an ambiguous situation. The "gorillas" staged a "coup"? They immediately declare themselves anti-Communist. They immediately say that the "coup" was needed to save the country from Communism. Immediately, they swear unconditional support for the imperialist policy against Cuba. And the imperialists know that these "gorillas" are their allies, but they don't want to displease their other ally, Betancourt. So they wait ten days, fifteen days. At first they say in the State Department that they don't know what to do, that as yet nothing has been decided. After twenty-five days, when Betancourt has been placated a little, and they have touched his palm a bit to tranquilize him, they begin to say that since they have said elections are going to be held, etc., etc., and they recognize the government of the "gorillas."

But the history of what has happened in Latin America since Playa Giron (*the failed mercenary invasion of Cuba at Bay of Pigs –ed.*) shows two things: that the politicians and the rulers who have had an independent attitude, an attitude of respect for the sovereignty of Cuba, who have refused to be instruments of Yankee imperialism in its attacks on Cuba, are the most stable governments in Latin America.

And thus we see that the government of Mexico is a stable government (applause); and thus we see that the Brazilian reaction has not been able to overthrow the Goulart government. (Applause.) And there have been no *coups d'etat* in Chile, nor *coups d'etat* or overturns in Bolivia, nor *coups d'etat* or overturns in Uruguay.

More Stable Governments

What does this mean? That the countries that maintain proper international positions, that the countries whose government officials are self-respecting, are much more solid and much more stable than the arch-reactionary government officials, blind instruments of Yankee imperialism who lack the basis and the strength to maintain themselves in power.

And thus one after the other, in parade, the deposed puppets have gone, some of them in a pitifully inglorious way, like the one in Ecuador who broke relations with Cuba out of cowardice, blackmailed by the militarists there in the service of the Pentagon. Naturally, when he broke with Cuba, the imperialists applauded him! No UPI or AP cable ever said he was a drunk. But from the day he was overthrown, all the AP and UPI cables said that he was a drunk and that he had been overthrown because he was a drunk.

What must be this man's feelings when one morning he wakes up outside his country, when he gets up and has a minute to think? How sad his situation must be, deposed from power, without honor, without glory, without dignity and without friends. Because the imperialists gave him the boot, and no progressive man, no decent man would want to honor him with his friendship. And thus these people are friends of no one, neither of the imperialists nor of the revolutionaries.

Nevertheless, the Revolution is solid, extremely solid, unshakeable, firm as a rock (applause); and the Revolution will see the fate that will befall the lackeys, those who surrender, who sell out their country. Because in Latin America revolutionary consciousness is growing; the spirit of struggle is growing and the Yankee imperialists are becoming more and more involved.

Thus they recently met with a group of Latin American military chiefs to whom they gave their orders. The intervention of the Yankee imperialists and militarists in Venezuela is increasing all the time. And Yankee military missions are there training thugs who murder patriots. And Yankee military missions and military technicians are there fighting the patriots who heroically, in the cities and fields of Venezuela, face imperialism. (Applause.) And in Guatemala Yankee intervention is also present, and militarists as advisers and technicians are intervening in the struggle against the patriots in Guatemala, supporting the reactionary tyranny that rules in that country.

This is the road that Yankee imperialism is following, the road of alliance with the worst "gorillas" against the revolutionary and patriotic movement that is arising in various countries of Latin America.

From here, from this speakers' platform, before the people of Cuba, we send a message of solidarity and brotherhood (applause) to the heroic Venezuelan revolutionaries (applause), who, with impressive valor and growing strength, in a brave struggle that is winning more and more admiration from the peoples of Latin America, confront the forces of reaction and the forces of imperialism there without slackening in the struggle, giving augury of a day of victory for this brave and selfless people who once led the way to independence in South America.

And it is really admirable and impressive the way this people, these youth, fight and struggle, reminding us of the days when our people battled in an equally heroic way against the tyranny.

And the imperialists are helpless to contain this struggle. No matter how many technicians they send, they will not be able to contain this struggle of the Venezuelan people (applause), because certainly, as happened in Cuba, the revolutionaries will have more and more support from the people. When youth see other youth fighting and dying, they are attracted by such heroism, such valor. They feel inspired to follow these examples. That's how the people react; that's how the workers react; that's how the farmers react.

And victory comes, sooner or later, as in Algeria (applause) —whose delegation, headed by Col. Boumedienne, is here with us today — whose people wrote inerasable and eternal pages of heroism in the struggle for their independence. (Applause.) Thus victory awaits those who fight, those who struggle, those who have faith in an idea and a method of struggle. We likewise send our fraternal and warm greetings to the heroic guerrillas in Guatemala who are fighting the tyranny. (Applause.)

We know these roads because we were on them for a long time, for long months in which no one had any news about us, and all that reached the world was news from our persecutors, the reports issued by the repressive forces. And we know the true merit of that silent, selfless struggle which the pioneers of revolutions must endure at certain stages.

And what can the Yankee imperialists do in face of this? Nothing, absolutely nothing! And the revolutionaries must not pave the way for the imperialists but hinder it by all means. They should not help the electoral deals of Yankee imperialism, but hinder and fight them by every means. (Applause.)

What can the imperialists do? What have they been able to do in South Vietnam? Nothing! (Applause.) Because there they continued a colonial war which a different country had given up. There they took over a colonial war, made it their own and sent their officers, their planes, their helicopters and their soldiers 10,000 miles away to kill Vietnamese, wipe out villages, wipe out Vietnamese woods and agricultural fields. And, in spite of their ruthless war against this people, they have failed.

So unpopular is the puppet that serves them as chief of the reaction that already his situation is untenable; even the religious masses have risen against him. And there they are, in active struggle against the puppet of imperialism, merging with the contingents of patriots and revolutionaries who for years in Vietnam have waged an extraordinarily heroic struggle against Yankee imperialism! (Applause.)

Our greetings and our fraternal message on this Twenty-sixth of July to the heroic fighters in Vietnam who are struggling against Yankee imperialism (applause), and whose representatives are also with us here today. (Applause.) What road are the imperialists seeking to follow in Latin America in the face of the revolutions? The road of Vietnam. And what awaits them? The most absolute failure.

We can't help smiling when the imperialists take measures under the pretext that they want to prevent us from helping the Latin American revolutionary movement economically. This is nothing but a pretext to hinder the economy of our country, to deprive our people of the means to acquire food, medicine and the things needed for the most basic requirements of the population. We can't help smiling because we know that when revolutionaries are fighting they don't need money or weapons sent from abroad.

Because I recall how difficult it was for us to raise a peso before we had a revolutionary force. But when it made itself felt, we collected millions of pesos, placing taxes on the landowners and sugar mill owners. (Applause.) And I well recall how in a few weeks we captured hundreds of arms from the enemy.

At first it was difficult. As in every human undertaking, beginnings are the most difficult. In the first year we were only able to pick up about 130 arms. Seventeen months after beginning the struggle, we had only about 300 arms. And when Batista's army launched its final offensive against us, in 70 days we captured 500 arms (applause), with which the number of combatants rose from 300 to 800. And with this we invaded the whole island; with the captured arms, with the most experienced leaders — comrades Camilo and Guevara (applause)—and with hardened veteran soldiers who had learned how to fight and triumph. And with these men the war was won.

In the decisive battles, which changed the course of the war, our forces were less than 500 armed men. Practically, with less than 500 men we waged the decisive battles which changed the course of the war.

It seems that we're going to be refreshed with a little rain here, but this won't be bad. Perhaps some of you can find shelter over there, but I believe that the best is to get wet here. (Applause.) After all, if we've had two years that were too dry let's welcome some water. Let's welcome a lot of water so there'll be more milk, more malanga, more meat, more food for the whole population. (Applause.)

We were speaking of these experiences of ours because the Venezuelan revolutionaries, when they need money, take it from the bourgeoisie and the imperialists. (Applause.) And when they need arms, they take them from the soldiers of the bourgeoisie and the imperialists. That is why we smile when the imperialists say we export revolution. No, no. We perhaps export our ideas, share our ideas with the revolutionaries of any part of the world.

Ideas Cannot Be Blockaded

Ideas cannot be blockaded. No blockade exists against ideas. Ideas fly enormous distances in a very brief time. They say that light waves are fast, that radio waves are fast, but ideas go faster than light itself. (Applause.)

And we are a quarry of ideas, a source of light to the workers and peasants of Latin America, for the impoverished Indians of Latin America. And for this reason, the inspired heart of our comrade Cartaya, who composed the "Hymn of the Twenty-sixth of July" (applause), a hymn that at one time was not the hymn of the multitudes, but a hymn intoned in the solitary cells of the prisons of the tyranny, and which one day came to be the hymn of a whole fighting people, the march of a whole nation; thus, likewise, by his own inspiration and initiative, comrade Cartaya has created the "March of Latin America." (Applause.) And the march goes:

Arise, Latin America!
Forward, forward, forward,
Let's march together toward socialism
Which is peace, progress and redemption.

Arise Latin America!
In the gigantic struggle will
The peoples be united like brothers
In an invincible phalanx.

Cuba, beacon of all the Americas, Proud and erect, awaits you. And
at the cry of war lift up The arms of liberty. (Applause.)

Peasants, workers and Indians,
To battle against the oppressive yoke.
Death to all the imperialists. America, revolution!

(Applause.)

It is possible that the imperialists may accuse us now of exporting hymns. And they might say that Cuba is a danger to the stability of the ultra-democratic governments of Latin America because she exports hymns, exports music. And, of course, music cannot be blockaded.

Maybe some day this hymn, this march, will be sung by millions and millions of men and women of Latin America. (Applause.) What the imperialists cannot stop is the advance of ideas, the triumph of ideas. And what is the situation of Yankee imperialism? A very difficult situation, because they cannot go to war and they cannot prevent the revolution of the peoples. (Applause.)

They would probably be willing to use even atomic weapons against the revolutionary peoples, but why don't they use them? Why? Because they have before them a major power that keeps them

from imposing their will on the world, because before them they have the crushing military power of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. (Applause and shouts of "Fidel, Khrushchev, we are with both!")

Without these circumstances, the imperialists would not hesitate to use all their means of war to crush the liberation movement and they would not have hesitated to use them against our country first of all. This contemporary reality, this change in the correlation of forces, is what prevents them from doing what they used to do, is what puts them in a situation in which they can no longer impose their will on the world, in which they cannot unleash war, in which they cannot impose war, because they know that the consequence would be their own extermination.

And that is why they cannot stop the revolutionary movement of the peoples, the liberation movement of the peoples, because this is determined by an inexorable law of history. That is why they haven't been able to crush the Cuban Revolution, and why they'll never be able to crush the Latin-American revolution. (Applause.)

The Yankee imperialists have just signed an agreement banning tests with nuclear arms in the atmosphere, the sea and outer space. This fact is a victory for the world consciousness for peace and a victory for the Soviet Union's peace policy. (Applause.) When the imperialists were the only ones who had nuclear arms, the monopoly of nuclear arms, they would never have signed any agreement of this kind.

It has been the development throughout the world of consciousness for peace and against war, and the development of a superior force in the military arena that has made them reconsider and adopt such a measure. Naturally, the whole world received the news with satisfaction. This shows us what the imperialists are like, how they act in the face of a real force, when they face realities over which they cannot impose their will — and how, whenever they have the opportunity, they create conflicts and do absolutely nothing to ease the tension.

This experience we have lived through in the last weeks. What have the imperialists done in the Caribbean? Have they taken steps to ease the tension? No.

To the proposals made by the Cuban Government, declaring — as it has done since the beginning of the Revolution — that it is willing to discuss with anyone, that it is willing to strive for the improvement of relations with all countries, including the United States, their answer has been new attacks against our country, new measures of an economic character. Their reaction has been to initiate a new aggressive maneuver, to initiate a series of steps to establish bases of operation in Central America for aggressive acts against Cuba. Thus they are not only training mercenaries in the United States for this purpose, but they are again sending mercenaries to Nicaragua and are building operational bases there against Cuba in an open, impudent, cynical and shameless way, in their usual style.

And thus, while pretending to accuse Cuba of encouraging subversion, they establish bases for aggression against our country, and begin anew to take those roads where they have met so many defeats and where they will have to face more defeats if they don't learn the lesson. (Applause.)

This doesn't worry us because we are always many months ahead of them. Many months! And we recall that at the end of 1960, when reports began to come from training camps in Nicaragua and Guatemala, we didn't have artillery men or tank crews, but we immediately began to organize and train them. And when finally they landed here, they didn't last seventy-two hours on the field of battle. (Applause.)

How can they intimidate us now when they follow the same beaten path? What plans can they make that we cannot prepare for? How can they harass us — when we have a powerful Air Force (applause); when we have respectable Naval Combat Units (applause); when we have powerful anti-landing equipment capable of firing a great distance (applause); when we have a disciplined, fighting Army equipped with the best and most modern arms and a staff that have not stopped for one instant to study and to prepare themselves. (Applause.) With invasions of mercenaries? Don't dream of it! With direct invasions? Don't imagine it, because they aren't going to have time to even imagine it! (Applause.) With a war of pirates? We will treat them like pirates, and apply to them the law of piracy! (Applause.)

Are they going to promote bands of robbers? And don't they know how we swept away the bands of counterrevolutionary robbers? (Applause.) They pretend to be unaware of the fact that not one of the murderers has escaped here. Not a single one! They pretend that we are going to stand with arms folded. Now, with units perfectly trained and hardened in that type of struggle. They pretend that we are going to stand arms folded. Now, at the end of 1963, they are going to intimidate us? With what we have now?! (Applause.)

Imperialists Are Swindlers

Clearly, to know what the Yankee imperialists are like, it is sufficient to mention the example of what happened with the indemnity payments. They had to pay \$53 million and they paid only \$43 million. They are perfect swindlers. (Shouts.) They even put the North American lawyer who dealt with us, in a bad position. They prevented him from fulfilling the agreements one hundred per cent. The U.S. Red Cross owes us \$10 million and the imperialist government of the United States is trying to swindle the Cuban people in a shameful way, after the Cuban people freed all the prisoners, some of whom are already being mobilized again to commit new crimes, even though they have not yet fully paid the indemnity.

And we hold the U.S. Red Cross and the United States government responsible for not having fulfilled the terms of the agreement, and we know very well how everything was arranged. They owe us \$10 million. They are swindlers!

Well, we said on an occasion here that if they didn't want to finance Cuba's economic development they shouldn't prepare any more "little invasions." But I believe that our people are losing patience. (Shouts.) And when they begin their incursions and their plans for pirates, infiltration of guerrillas and arms — well, I don't know in what way, because previously they came with impunity and dropped them by plane whereas now our forces are very advanced, but **very advanced**, in the knowledge and use of land-to-air rockets against planes. (Applause.) When they begin — these people who are always at least half a century behind in social questions and quite far behind in these things related to us — since we always know what they are going to do, (we always do know and we always take steps in advance), so I believe that we will not apply this business of indemnification. I believe that the people are getting tired of it (*emphasis in original –ed.*)

Let those in favor of indemnification raise their hands. (No hands are raised.) Those in favor of our applying the revolutionary law, raise your hands. (The people congregated in the **Plaza de la Revolution** raise their hands.) (*emphasis in original –ed.*)

We want the visitors to be able to appreciate this. (Shouts of "To the wall! To the wall!") We want the visitors to be able to observe this, so they can see how our people think; because since the hordes of mercenaries and traitors who came here, bombing and murdering even defenseless families, the imperialists, while on the one hand launching the pirates, on the other hand organized a campaign begging for the lives of their pirates.

And they did this after Giron. There were Latin-American rulers who sent communications soliciting us to spare the lives of these people. It would be better now for them to solicit the gringo imperialists not to send them to attack Cuba. It would be better that the governments or philanthropic persons who feel sorry for these pirates — they can, of course, feel sorry in a way our people cannot, since we felt their claws — let them now take action and write to Kennedy, and prevent in time these pirates from coming here, because you have seen the way the people think. (Applause.) And, simply, as the people think. — And when the people think this way there are reasons for it. (Shouts of "To the wall! To the wall!")

Seeing things from afar is not the same as seeing them from here. To learn from afar about happenings in Cuba is different from suffering these things. Agents have burned stores where workers have perished, roasted in the flames. Acts of sabotage and crimes of every kind have been committed, costing dozens of lives.

This is why the people think the way they do, why they react this way, and they are right — because they were generous, not once but many times. They prefer to apply full justice as an example to be studied rather than accept indemnities from the imperialists. (Applause.)

This we did once, we did it once and may it serve as an example, an example to the world of how Cuba acts, how the government of the United States acts, and how this ruffian Kennedy acts. (Shouts.) Let the world know: we freed the mercenaries, they did not finish paying the indemnity and they are already mobilizing them for new attacks.

Our country took a series of steps, it declared its readiness to discuss. And what happened? New attacks from the imperialists, new aggressive plans against Cuba. Such are the characteristics of this government of the United States.

When this government came to power, it spoke of a new policy, a different policy. And what did it do? It fostered and carried out the attack on Cuba. Recently he [Kennedy] spoke in terms of peace in a North American university, and a few days later he stopped in Berlin to use bellicose and warlike language. Now on one hand he signs an agreement which tends to ease tensions and on the other hand he practices and promotes new crimes and new aggressions against Cuba. And everyone knows that this is no game; everyone knows the consequences that this policy has brought; everyone knows that this policy placed the world at the brink of war; everyone knows that this policy of aggressions forced us to defend ourselves, forced us to take measures for our defense, and that this is no game, and that this policy almost involved the world in a thermonuclear war, and that along this road the United States, without so much as consulting its allies, almost dragged them into a thermonuclear war (*emphasis by the Web .*)

They should have given up these aggressive roads, they should have given up those wrong doings and not return to stirring up the fire of tension here, the fire of danger, not poke up new provocations here.

As you know they took the measure of blocking Cuban funds in order to hinder our trade and we took the measure of nationalizing the only thing they had left here and that was the embassy building. (Applause.) Now they claim that this is illegal and not in accordance with the agreements. How shameless is the government of the United States!

They have not respected any agreement, any international law. They are constantly violating our airspace. They infiltrate saboteurs, agents, spies. They prepare bases for aggressions. They have perpetrated hundreds of violations of laws and agreements and now they say that the Cuban government, in taking an action in just and legitimate defense, cannot nationalize the embassy. Well, we have nationalized it and this agreement will have to be complied with! (Applause.)

This building is in charge of the Swiss diplomatic representation and our country is willing to offer the Swiss diplomatic mission all facilities to move all the files to another place at their convenience and turn the building over to the Cuban government. We hope that the Swiss diplomatic mission recognizes this legitimate and sovereign action of the Cuban people. We hope (applause) because this problem does not involve Switzerland. It is an act of legitimate defense. And, whenever they wish to, we can discuss who are the violators of laws, who are the aggressors and who are the ones that are in reality defending a legitimate right, which is us. We can discuss this with whomever necessary because we know that we are right. (Applause.) That is why we hope that there won't be any conflict with the Swiss authorities and that the Swiss authorities — faithful to their policy of neutrality which they have traditionally maintained — will respect this legitimate and sovereign act of the people of Cuba. (Applause.)

Yes, we said that we are willing to discuss with the Yankee imperialists. They attack us? Do they believe by chance that we are pleading for negotiations? Don't they understand that this is a position of principle with the Cuban government, a position maintained since the beginning? Do they perhaps believe that we are "in up to the neck" and that we've got to have them rush in to establish diplomatic relations with us? We believe that they are the ones who are "in up to the neck." (Applause.)

Cuba is Not a Satellite

What do the imperialists say? That they won't re-establish diplomatic relations with a "Soviet satellite in the Caribbean." The only country in America — the only one — where there is no foreign-owned property, the only country in America which is the owner of all its wealth, its mines, its oil, its land, its factories (applause)—which does not have to give a centavo in tribute to the Yankee monopolies; the only country in America that can say, "These riches are mine; we're going to develop them now; we're going to use them the way that best fits our interests" — that's Cuba. And they say it's a satellite. This people who own their small island, its lands, its mountains, its coasts, its buildings, its factories, its schools; who are putting all these riches at the service of the future, of the growing generations, of youth who constitute the hundreds of thousands of technicians that will make our country advance towards horizons perhaps unforeseeable today! (Applause.)

Clearly, in the same way that this is a "captive people" — according to these gentlemen — "the captive people of Cuba," this is the "satellite" country of the Americas. The only country that is in position to benefit completely from its wealth.

And what has it received from the Soviet Union? Aid so extraordinary that possibly what they have provided us with in a year is more than imperialism has provided to all the oligarchies put together. (Applause.) And the Soviet Union (*socialist Russia – Ed.*), the Soviet people, have made sacrifices to help us and have given extraordinary aid in building factories. Are they the property of the Soviet Union? No, they are Cuban. They have sent fifteen modern fishing ships, which have enabled us to supply fish for our population (applause), and they are training the crews in order to deliver these ships to us. They have delivered planes to maintain our communications and established a direct line in spite of all the obstacles placed by imperialism, thanks to which we maintain secure our communication with the world. In Mariel they are building a thermoelectric plant of 500,000 kilowatts. For whom? For Electric Bond & Share? No! For the people of Cuba! In "Renté" they are building a thermoelectric plant of 200,000 kilowatts. For whom? For the Electric Company to rob the people? No!

For the people of Cuba; for our needs, for our industries! (Applause.) They are going to solve the problem of mechanizing cane cutting in our country, hard work, at which hundreds of thousands of workers have to make enormous sacrifices every year. This will make possible enormous harvests in the future. Because in the future — we say it so the whole world will know — we are going to produce great quantities of sugar. And we propose in the year 1970 to produce eight million tons of sugar (applause), because our country has the conditions for sugar — plans which we could not even dream of without mechanizing cane cutting. And the Soviet Union is solving this problem for us, making efforts, making sacrifices.

And this is what Mr. Kennedy calls a "satellite." In order to be a "satellite" we would have to be exploited. All the sugar mills here would have to belong to the imperialist Yankees; all the mines, the electricity, the public services — as in many countries of Latin America — and these are "free countries!" But these "free countries" can't get even "four cats" together in a meeting generally. Let them ask Betancourt to call a meeting in the *Plaza del Silencio* and see how many turn out. These are the "free countries." They are not captives. No!

What do they mean when they say they cannot co-exist with a satellite? We can live without co-existing with them, of course, in the first place, since we do not exist because of them; we exist in spite of them — which is not the same thing. But they can't co-exist with us? What do they want? That we make ideological concessions? We will not make an atom of ideological concession to the imperialists. (Applause.) And if they want to discuss, if they want to negotiate, they have to discuss and negotiate with the Marxist-Leninist Cuban Revolution. (Big applause.) And without the slightest alteration in our position of fraternal, warm, indestructible friendship with the Soviet Union and the socialist camp! (Applause.) (Emphasis by the Web Ed.)

Concessions of an ideological order we will not make. In the ideological sphere we will not make a single concession. We are a firm people, a revolutionary people, a people with only one policy, and a loyal people that knows how to maintain friendship without a shadow of opportunism in our policy.

We are incapable of the politics of "turn the coat" which characterizes Yankee imperialism. If they don't want to co-exist what recourse remains open to them? They don't want to co-exist, but we are here and will continue to be here. So they don't want to co-exist in words but they have to co-exist in fact since they can't do anything else. And facts are stubborn things.

In the first place, we don't need them to live. Even trade with them could mean some advantages, but not great, nothing essential for our economy. Do you know where we must get our means of living? From our own work, organizing it better; from our own capacity of production. (Applause.)

Do you know where there are hundreds of millions of pesos? In the better utilization of our resources, in the better organization of our work. That's where our resources are. And that's where we always have to look. This will be twenty times more to our advantage than the gains that could be derived from the fact that the imperialists might want to trade with us. We must recognize this; we must recognize this.

We said, "We are ready to discuss." Yes, we are ready to discuss indemnity formulas, as we have done with the Canadians, the relations with whom we can point to as a model of relations between a socialist country and a capitalist country, and they are good, because' they don't interfere in our internal affairs. (Applause.) When the nationalization laws went into effect, we indemnified the Canadian interests; and we have always resolved any differences in a friendly way.

Likewise, speaking to the English ambassador, we told him we were ready to discuss indemnity matters, to discuss some sort of economic agreement which would include indemnification for the

interests that were nationalized. And in a similar way we have talked with the Swiss. In other words, we have applied this policy.

We are ready to discuss. They don't want to? The worse for them, we won't discuss! They don't want to establish relations with us? We are very sorry; we will wait! We will even wait until there is a socialist government in the United States. We are perfectly able to wait! (Applause.)

The Negro population of the United States waited many years and now you see. They are engaged in an active struggle in defense of their rights. And therefore another message of solidarity and fraternity to the Negro population of the United States, who have our full sympathy and who are the victims of fierce repression there. We have seen these photographs of how they unleash vicious dogs against Negro citizens, as a symbol of "representative democracy."

And, naturally, what engendered this? This hatred against the Negro population was engendered by slavery. Who has kept it alive? Capitalism. There will be discrimination as long as there is exploitation of man by man in the United States. This is a great truth.

And didn't discrimination also exist here? And who imported discrimination here? They did. All those aristocratic families. What way of life did they have and idealize? The American Way of Life. And when did discrimination end here? When the exploitation of man by man ended. And it ended! That's why they don't want them to come to Cuba. That's why they don't want them to come and see what there is in Cuba.

We are ready to point out whatever we may have done wrong — our mistakes, our deficiencies, our problems. We can point them out because we don't have to hide them. They exist not because we want them — they exist despite our not wanting them. They are problems arising from the inexperience of the revolutionaries, and from the struggle we have had to carry on against the imperialists, and the constant hostility in which we have had to live, which has compelled us to spend 300 million pesos for defense. They have forced us to spend 300 million pesos for defense! And yet there is not a corner where we don't have a school; there is no peasant without medical assistance, and there are 100,000 youth studying on government scholarships (applause); despite the inexperience of the first years, an inexperience which we are overcoming; despite the obstacles that Yankee imperialism has constantly been placing in our way.

The country is progressing, the Revolution is progressing and deficiencies are being overcome. And yet we do not conceal them and our doors are open to visitors. The proof of it is the 600 visitors from various places — 600, who for us are worth 600 million! (Applause.) Still more, because illustrious and outstanding personalities have come from practically every country to get an appreciation of the Cuban Revolution first hand. And our doors are open.

What kind of country is it that won't let its citizens travel? And thus they are always telling the world about the measures which East Germany took to combat espionage and sabotage in Berlin, and yet they try to establish an abyss between the United States and Cuba to prevent their citizens from coming here. Let the Negro leaders of the United States come here, let them visit Cuba so they can see a society without discrimination! (Applause.) And so that they can understand by what road discrimination can be ended, which is by eliminating the exploitation of man by man!

Of course, they don't want to permit that; they don't want these people to see the Revolution first hand. And thus, speaking of relations, which was what started this conversation on other questions, what are we waiting for? We are not at all impatient. But are they putting conditions on us? This is like the story they tell about the man who said, "Get me out of this well and I'll spare your life." We are not in any well, because we are with the Revolution and with the future and with the world of tomorrow.

And they are in a well, because they are with reaction, with imperialism and with the world of the past. With the world of the past! (Applause.) And they are victims of this politics which has brought tremendous harm to the people of the United States.

You can now see the economic problems they are beginning to have, the problems of foreign exchange. And they are isolating themselves. They are isolating themselves from the rest of the world, because the United States is not the only country in the world. The interests of the Yankee imperialists are not the only interests in the world.

And thus with Cuba they are following this stupid policy of isolation. Today we are the ones who are isolated; tomorrow it will be them. They follow in Latin America the same road as in Vietnam and they will isolate themselves more and more. The intelligent policy is the one followed by those countries which, regardless of their social system, maintain diplomatic and commercial relations with a revolutionary country. The intelligent policy is that of the capitalist countries which maintain diplomatic and commercial relations with Cuba, because they are indicating a road and setting a precedent. And because one day Latin America will be like Cuba — if not all, a great part of it. (Applause.) And some day, sooner or later, in the inevitable course of history, it will be all!

U.S. Faces Isolation

And then the Yankee imperialists will be the isolated ones in a world that is no longer anyone's private affair, because all countries have interests in this world — all countries have necessities in this world.

What have the imperialists gained by their stupid policy against Cuba? The results are clear. They have destroyed the OAS. Now nobody pays any attention to it. The governments that have some self respect and that have their own policy give more and more evidence and proof of a real independent sentiment. The puppet governments have been overthrown by the military dictatorships of the "gorillas" which are, it can be said, the threshold of the revolution, just as the "gorillas" here were the threshold of the Cuban Revolution.

And with respect to the world, the United States is creating an infinitude of problems for numerous western countries that make a living out of maritime trade, out of maritime transportation. A series of European non-socialist countries, or non — we could say — Marxist-Leninist European countries, have large merchant marine fleets and much of their foreign exchange comes from transporting cargo.

Thus, many of these ships have been operating in the trade between Cuba and the Soviet Union. The measures taken by the United States against these ships are seriously harming the economic interests of these countries, interfering with freedom of trade. But, something more — as a consequence of these measures and of this policy, the Soviet Union has found it necessary to elaborate a program for the construction of an immense merchant fleet of between 20 and 30 million tons.

Why? Because as a consequence of these experiences, a consequence of these actions of the Yankee imperialists, they have found it necessary to take precautionary measures to prevent their trade from being blockaded.

Perhaps they would invest, or would have invested, these funds in other industries or in other branches of the economy. What will be the result of this? The appearance of an immense Soviet fleet will inevitably displace in maritime traffic the fleets of other European countries whose ships at present are often idle.

The policy of the government of the United States clashes with the interests of many countries of Europe. This is without going deeper into the question, like the fact that Yankee imperialist capital is trying to displace the capital of other European countries in various parts of the world. This is aside from the fact that countries like Japan, France, England, Italy and others, which at the end of the war were in ruins and on whom the Yankee imperialists were able to impose at will the type of treaties, the type of trade agreements, that suited their interests. Today, as a consequence of the development of these countries, a change has occurred in the correlation of technical resources, in the production of each one of these countries in need of markets.

And naturally the Yankee imperialists try to obstruct, try to control the markets. And other countries of the world need to trade with us and with other revolutionary peoples in the future. What will be the result? That the Yankee imperialists will become more and more isolated. Today, we are the isolated ones. But in a not-too-distant future, they will be the isolated ones. It will be them! (Applause.)

And it is deplorable — deplorable — that the people of the United States should have to suffer the consequences of this stupid, clumsy, ruinous policy. Because this gentleman — and in general the last presidents the United States has had — but this one is like a horseman galloping from blunder to blunder, from stupidity to stupidity. And this small country, Cuba, has cost him innumerable setbacks and political and moral defeats. Why? For lack of respect for the will of our people, for lack of respect for the sovereignty of our people! And consequently, because of this policy of hostility and relentless hounding, they have harvested nothing but defeats, setbacks, fiascos. And it is deplorable that the people of the United States have to suffer the consequences!

Because the people of the United States — and these are not demagogic words but are attested to by the facts — the people of the United States are industrious people, often confused on a wide scale by the incessant propaganda of the monopolies. They are a people like any other people, victims of the system under which they live, but whose virtues could be demonstrated as our people have demonstrated theirs with a change in the system.

And I say that toward the people of the United States there is no resentment or hatred in our hearts. And here is the proof. How have our people received the young U.S. students everywhere? (Applause.) With friendliness, with true amiability, as brothers, without hate and without resentment! Because a revolutionary people that marches with the truth, and has a political education, knows how to distinguish between a good and a bad system, knows how to distinguish between the people and the system which exploits and victimizes them. And so, in every American citizen, in every man and woman of the people, we will always see a victim of the system.

And this is a result of the consciousness and of the political education of our people. That is why we have welcomed these students with open arms. We admire them for their courage, for when there are youth who stand firm against the mediocrity of the milieu, in face of the asphyxia created by propaganda, in face of the lie, they are valiant youth. (Applause.) And we have welcomed them here regardless of their political or religious ideas; because they came to see, to find out. They have been permitted to visit Cuba, to talk with anyone they want to, to check for themselves both our mistakes and successes. We have offered them every facility.

And we think that they have made a fine gesture, really a brave gesture, worthy of the best traditions of the United States. Because what were they defending when they defended the right to come to Cuba? The constitutional right of any American citizen to travel freely, to obtain information, to learn the truth. They did not come to defend the political ideas of the Cuban Revolution; they came to defend their right to travel, their right to know the truth, their right to obtain genuine information. And no one can be reproached or punished for this.

We hope this will serve as an example, and I am sure that this will serve as an example, because the brave always find admirers, always serve as an example. May this serve as an example for the North American youth! (Applause.) It inspires us to think that there are young people like these, and that there may be thousands of youth like them, independent of mind, brave enough to defend their rights and free themselves from the lies which the prejudiced campaign of the vested interests seeks to instill in the minds of the youth through the movies, films, comics and all possible forms which we have already overcome. This is a great merit in our eyes. Consequently they will always have our friendship and our gratitude. And we declare that our doors are open to all youth who want to visit us, who want to come as friends. Because those who come on friendly terms (applause), those who come as friends, can most certainly stroll in the streets of Havana and be welcomed with open arms.

In fact, friends are as much the owners of this country as we ourselves are, and just as much brothers to any of us as any Cuban. (Applause.)

And so, after expressing these ideas, we can sum up what the situation is on the Tenth Anniversary. We will soon celebrate the Fifth Anniversary — the Fifth Anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution. (Applause.)

Ah! And how must we turn to advantage the next five years? Each one of these five years must signify as much in advancing our organization and our production and our work as all the previous five years put together; for these five years put us under obligation to work better, to use the experience gained in these past years, so that each year will be worth five; because we will continue from year to year to sum up where we stand, and if we continue growing — and we must continue to grow to the degree that consciousness rises, the Revolution overcomes difficulties, the revolutionary work proceeds better — there will be more and more people each Twenty-sixth of July to celebrate with us in the *Plaza de la Revolucion*. (Applause.)

This should encourage all of us to work and give the maximum in effort and energy, to analyze our work, to overcome our deficiencies, to improve our organization, to make good use of our resources, to demonstrate what our people are capable of as an industrious people, as a creative people, not only as a heroic people, as a brave people capable of dying in the trenches, but capable too of giving their lives for work (applause), of giving their lives for creative work, facing tasks with equal courage, with equal determination. We must do this if we want to make great advances.

You must understand what expenditures are imposed on us by the need to defend ourselves. Because we have to defend ourselves, because we must keep our forces in perfect combat readiness, preventing any surprise attack, always being on the alert against any aggression. And yet, how the number of children going to school increases, how our needs increase, how our need for technicians increases, how the need to make big investments increases — in factories, in agriculture, in housing, in water systems, in a whole series of things the people need and which can only be obtained by working. They will not fall from heaven; they will come by the sweat of our brow, by our own efforts. These years must be years of work. The first years of revolution are never years of abundance. (Applause.) Let us realize this. Let us understand this. These are the years of more work, of more effort, of shortages. Things are lacking, and that is the price that must be paid for the future.

This would not be our situation if we had not been exploited for 50 years by the imperialists. How great will be the abundance of our people 30 years from now, 40 years from now, 50 years from now — the years we lost in the past and which today we are trying to gain back by advancing through forced marches! And with all we have been able to advance in these five years of Revolution; we have done no more than create the conditions. We must advance better and more rapidly in the next years. This we must understand — wealth can come solely from work, but from intelligent work, well-organized work, with the more rational use of our resources, with the application of technical knowledge.

This spirit for work has been taking hold in the consciousness of the people and it must be brought to all corners of the country, to the countryside, the mountains, the factories, everywhere. We must struggle, not for increases in wage funds, but for increases in production. It is illusory to increase wages if there is not an equivalent increase in production of goods. Let us first increase production; let us economize on unnecessary work; let us avoid overloading enterprises with unnecessary employees, with bureaucracies. If only every enterprise would do what the sugar industry has done — thousands of jobs have been amortized. Workers formerly employed only three months of the year in a sugar mill today work all the year round in trucking. Their former jobs were amortized.

There are many sectors of production where there is a surplus of people. And when there is a surplus of people in a place it is people who do not produce. Everyone should be where he can produce the most. If we have 130,000 or 140,000 people in the distribution sector and 100,000 can do the job, we could use the other 30,000 or 40,000 in more productive work. Let us avoid an overload of bureaucratic employees, employees in offices. (Applause.)

Toward Rationalized Production

We must establish wage scales. We must rationalize the work and we must establish norms. We must establish adequate means to overcome shortages. Remember that when we sit down at the table we all consume material goods — all of us. And all of us demand our share of material goods. But if only a few are producing material goods and many not producing material goods of any kind, then there will be little when we sit down at the table.

Today our people are already learning these things. Already our people see in the loafer, in the parasite, an enemy. (Whistles and applause.) In the absentee worker they see an enemy who does not want to produce. They see an enemy in the unnecessary employee, in the useless bureaucracy — when it is a bureaucracy that has no purpose, that doesn't provide a service. Because it is clear that a teacher does not produce material goods, but is preparing, is educating; a doctor heals; a musician entertains the people, is — let's say — an artist. In short, there are many jobs that do not produce material goods. Some useful work is done by an office worker, too, in keeping certain accounts, doing certain work; that is, in an office also they work in a useful way. What is bad is an excess of employees in offices, an excess of non-productive employees.

That is what we must realize. The way to abundance for all is through increased production, in the greatest number of men and women working in production. And if we want to have factories, to mechanize our agriculture and have large fishing boats, it is because we want to increase the productivity of labor, raise the productive capacity of every citizen so that every citizen can have more.

We know that privileges still exist. We know that a layer of bourgeois parasites still exists in our country and that they have many privileges, many privileges. (Applause.) We also know that in a certain black market bills are circulating from proprietor to proprietor, that in this social class, this bourgeois layer, there is plenty of everything, of things which the workers, the wage earner, cannot obtain. We also know that this bourgeois layer is trying to corrupt the employees under them. We know of cases of bourgeois who, before leaving, doubled the salaries in their enterprises in order to create problems for the Revolution, to force the Revolution to rectify the situation. We know that there are bourgeois elements who are rotten with money and who corrupt, or are trying to corrupt, people, widening their base. We know of these things.

These are problems that the Revolution still has before it for settlement. But they cannot be settled between one day and the next, between evening and morning. These problems must finally be settled, sooner or later, because this must become more and more a country of workers and less and less a country of parasites. And so we still have many things to establish, to put in order, to organize.

We were talking with our fellow Minister of Education and we told him, "Look, out of every thirty or forty boys, four or five haven't had Basic Secondary school, and that's bad. Many of them come from bourgeois or petty-bourgeois families who don't instill a love of study. This is bad, because we are going to incubate parasites, and then under socialism we will have developed an uncultured, ignorant, parasitic youth. We must take steps," I told our fellow Minister of Education, "in such a way as to punish absentees from Basic Secondary school. We should make education compulsory up to Basic Secondary. (Applause.) And the undisciplined, loafing, absentee youth should be sent to certain schools in the mountains. (Applause.) So that he can't escape, this filter. Because socialist society cannot permit, must not permit, the development in its midst of a parasitic element, a potential lumpen of tomorrow. And for this we will have two institutions: school and compulsory military service." (Prolonged applause and chants of "*Fidel, seguro, a los vagos dales duro!*" [Fidel, Fidel, give the loafers hell!])

Sometimes you find people loafing around.

"Do you work?"

"No."

"Do you belong to the militia?" "No."

"What do you do? What have you dedicated yourself to? How do you make a living?" (Applause.)

Sometimes we have to send a good worker, often excellent producers, excellent workers, genuine workers, we have to send them into combat units to defend the country, sacrificing production, while these young gentlemen are doing absolutely nothing. (Applause.) And we have to ask for sacrifices from the workers, good workers, to join a unit, to serve in such-and-such a unit to maintain our forces, always asking for sacrifices from the workers.

Isn't it correct to establish as a duty the defense of the country, not for just a few but for all? (The crowd answers, "Yes!") Naturally, when this legislation has been studied and put into effect, we must take into account the different cases, and a system of priority, who will be called first, and who later, so that we call them up in a rational way to this service without affecting education, without affecting the formation of technicians, without affecting production. Because then we will be able, according to each citizen's social role, the task he is carrying out, to call him up or not, according to the needs.

Fortunately, our army already has fine organization, sufficient organization, sufficient cadres of officers and of classes in shape to teach and our country is in position to organize an army not only on the basis of the militia, but on compulsory military service. The militia will continue; the militiamen will continue. (Applause.) Everyone will be a soldier of his country but won't be in permanent service. To call too many times on workers who have families, although they are magnificent soldiers, is not right and it's not best for our country. Now every young man will have to go through school or through the army (applause); and these institutions will be enemies of vagrancy, enemies of indiscipline, enemies of the lumpen. The time will come when there will not be a single gambling den left here. There will not be a single poolroom left, unless it's in a workers' club. (Applause.) And even the cock-fighting pits — for all our respect and love for the peasants — even the cock-fighting pits will also disappear some day. (Shouts.)

Because, of course, there were some pits in some places, but the worst is that in some places they have put up new ones. No revolutionary authority, whether, municipal, local, or at any level, must permit the establishment of another single gambling joint or cock-fighting pit. We must fight against vice, in one way or another, and in a consistent manner, because we close the door on them and they come in through the window. (Applause.)

In short, it is time to decide what kind of country we want to be, what kind of citizens we want to

be; what kind of citizens we want to form. And you see it; the studiousness, the consciousness, the discipline — around you — the discipline of our soldiers, of our students, of our farm girls, of the whole people, in their clear political vision, their clear understanding of the problems. This is the result of our work; this is the result of organization.

What do we want to be within the next five, ten, twenty years? We must ask ourselves, "What kind of citizen will the citizen of tomorrow be? What kind of country will ours be tomorrow?" We must pose these problems and struggle over them.

This is what so many men shed their blood for,, and this is what our people have fought for since Independence, since those brave *mambises* who struggled ten years without seeing victory (applause), since those heroic fighters for Independence who struggled so stubbornly, only to see Cuba taken over by the Americans. For this, so many glorious and gigantic men died, our forefathers of the Independence, Marti and Maceo, Gomez (applause), whose names, whose names we must revere increasingly in all their greatness for what they did so that we could have this.

Yesterday I was telling a group of comrades in a meeting that, without that effort, our country would have been colonized by the Yankees like Puerto Rico. We would not have had the "status quo" that we had, although the "status quo" of a capitalist country and subject to imperialism, but not a colonized country. And this "status quo" was won with the blood of our *mambises*, with the blood of our liberators who wrote the first chapters, who built the first stepping stones (applause), who built the first stairs of this epic, who made possible this opportunity of today through the effort of all, all those who fell in the struggle for the Republic.

Because this work is only ours in part and most of it is the work of those who preceded us and prepared the way. We are the privileged people who had the opportunity to see our own power, our own Revolution, our own triumph, our own opportunity. (Applause.)

And we should know how to take advantage of this opportunity, know how to utilize it, not be finicky, not complain, but work to produce, to create what we need, to raise the level of consciousness, to struggle for organization, to resolve our problems (applause), because we are the generation privileged to have the opportunity. And what is this that we see here except an opportunity?

Those who are able like us to see from this rostrum the immense mass of youth extending clear to the palms of Principe, can get a concrete idea of what the future is like, of how our youth are being forged. (Applause.) Where are your children? Being educated, prepared with all our means so that nothing is lacking for them, without discrimination, without poverty, because here no one is poor, because here everybody has absolutely what he needs. And this is moving ahead, this is progress, this is an idea of what tomorrow will be like.

That is why today it isn't enthusiasm alone that brings us together. What brings us together is enthusiasm plus consciousness, plus the sense of duty, plus the call of our country. Let us meditate. (Applause.) Now that we are maturing, now that we have borne some years of Revolution, let's examine our work; let's consider our duties; let's accomplish them; let's go to work; let's do our best. Let's carry out this slogan: "The call is not to arms but to work. But to work, arms at our side!" (Applause.)

And let each of us make a pledge before his own conscience, before our fallen comrades, before those who died without being able to see all this, those who gave their lives in the dark hours of the underground struggle, without the inspiration of a whole people behind a Revolution, those who died in the battles in the tangled woods without being able to have this privilege. Before them, let us pledge to carry out our duty, to work. Let us ask ourselves what we have done; if we have done enough. Let us

ask ourselves if we can feel satisfied with what we have done, or if we are ashamed at not having done more. And let this consciousness, this sense of duty be converted into organization, and within organization let it be converted into a party, the United Party of the Socialist Revolution! (Applause.)

We have much work ahead of us: first, to complete the full and rounded organization of our party. And then there are many other problems to be solved, problems concerning local life, local institutional life; problems concerning the institutional life of the state which we must solve in the next years and which we did not solve in the first years, although we have done well. Because it is not the same to build in reality as to build in the imagination. On the realities we will build our local institutions, our regional institutions, our state, national institutions. The problems we have before us we must solve because we must continue to be an example; we must continue to show the road to our brother peoples of Latin America; and we must elaborate and create an answer for every one of their anxieties, for every one of their questions. This is our duty!

Patria o Muerte! Venceremos! [Country or death! We will win.] (Ovation.)

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